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POINTERS ON FREEZING
YEAST AND QUICK BREADS, PIES, COOKIES, AND CAKE

With the aid of your home freezer you can prepare and freeze for future use pies, cakes, and many other baked products.

When doing the family baking--prepare a few extras to put in the freezer. For special occasions you may wish to get some of the food ready ahead of time on less busy days. You may want to freeze some baked foods containing fruit during the fresh fruit season.

The following suggestions are given as an aid to obtaining good quality in frozen baked goods.

Frozen Quick Breads

Biscuits may be frozen baked or unbaked. In either case, use standard recipes. Use double acting baking powder for biscuits to be frozen unbaked. Roll dough 1/4-inch for thin biscuits, 1/2-inch for thick. Unbaked dough when rolled and cut may be stacked with double layers of water resistant material such as cellophane between biscuits; then should be promptly packaged in moisture-vapor-proof containers and frozen. When taken from the freezer, the unbaked biscuits may be baked without thawing in a hot oven (425° F.) for 20 to 25 minutes, or for 12 to 15 minutes if biscuits are first thawed 1/2 hour at room temperature.

Biscuits baked before freezing should be cooled, wrapped in moisture-vapor-resistant material and frozen promptly. They may be thawed by heating in a slow oven (300° F.) about 20 minutes. Unbaked biscuits will retain good quality in frozen storage about a month; baked biscuits about 3 months.

Muffins may be prepared by standard recipes. Unbaked muffins in individual paper baking cups may be frozen, then stacked and packaged in moist-vapor-resistant material the following day. Unbaked muffins taken from the freezer should be thawed at room temperature for about an hour, then baked. Muffins baked before freezing should be cooled and promptly packaged in moisture-vapor-resistant material, and frozen. Baked muffins may be thawed by heating in a slow oven (300° F.) about 20 minutes. For best quality, use unbaked muffins within 2 to 4 weeks after freezing; baked, within 2 months.

Frozen Yeast Rolls and Bread

Baked yeast rolls and bread freeze well. They may be prepared and baked as usual, and should be cooled quickly, wrapped in moisture-vapor-resistant material, sealed, and frozen at once. Frozen bread may be thawed in the wrappings at room temperature. Rolls are best thawed and heated in a 250° F. to 300° F. oven for 15 to 20 minutes depending on size of rolls. Baked yeast breads will keep longer than unbaked in frozen storage, but lose quality gradually.

Freezing unbaked dough: Quality of frozen unbaked products is less reliable than that of bread or rolls baked before freezing. Use slightly more sugar than in products to be eaten fresh. Coating all surfaces with fat helps prevent toughening of crust. Rolls or bread may be shaped, then packaged for freezing, or bulk dough may be flattened after one rising to 1 or 1-1/2 inch thickness and packaged. Between shaped rolls or dough layers, place two layers of water resistant material such as cellophane. Wrap in moisture-vapor-resistant material, and freeze. Thaw wrapped dough and rolls in a warm, moist place. After thawing, shape bulk dough into loaves. Let shaped bread and rolls rise until light in pans in a warm place, then bake at usual temperature. For best quality use unbaked yeast rolls and bread within 2 or 3 weeks after freezing.

Frozen Pies

Standard recipes may be used to prepare fruit pies and most other pies for freezing. Custard pie does not freeze satisfactorily. Meringue on pies tends to toughen and stick to wrappings.

Fruit pies may be frozen either before or after baking. Crust is more tender and flaky and flavor fresher when pies are frozen before baking. Use paper pie plates made for baking, or rust-proof metal pie plates if you can spare them.

Special treatment is needed to preserve color and flavor for some fruits such as apples and peaches in unbaked pies. Steam apple slices 2 minutes, cool, and drain; or dip raw apples slices in a solution of 1/2 teaspoon (1000 milligrams) ascorbic acid (vitamin C) to 1 cup water. Apples for 4 or 5 pies can be dipped in this amount of solution. Peel peaches without scalding and slice. Mix peach slices with 1 tablespoon lemon juice or ascorbic acid solution made by dissolving 1/4 teaspoon (500 milligrams) ascorbic acid in 1 tablespoon water. Coat berries or cherries with a mixture of sugar and flour. Use spices lightly, especially cloves, because they may become bitter and discolor frozen filling.

Do not cut steam vents in top crust of frozen unbaked pies until pies are removed from freezer. Cut vents just before baking. When freezing baked pies, prepare as usual and cool thoroughly before wrapping. Wrap pie in moisture-vapor-resistant material and seal with heat or tape. Cover pie with a paper plate and place in stockinette or paper box for added protection.

Best way to thaw frozen baked fruit pies is to remove wrapper and heat pie at once in a moderate oven (375° F.) for 30 minutes. Bake frozen unbaked fruit pies the same as you would fresh pies allowing about 10 minutes longer than for fresh pies. Allow chiffon and cream pies to thaw at room temperature. Recommended storage life for frozen pies of high quality is 2 to 3 months.

Freezing pie dough is not very practical. Frozen unrolled dough takes a long time for thawing. Dough rolled before freezing is too brittle to handle without breaking. Making dough into pie shells is satisfactory, but empty shells take up considerable freezer space.

Frozen Cookies

Cookies of bar, dropped, rolled, and refrigerator types may be frozen unbaked or baked, and the quality during storage for 6 months to 1 year is similar to fresh cookies. Recipes high in fat and low in moisture are best for freezing. Cookie dough and baked cookies are packed in moisture-vapor-proof containers of suitable size and shape. Unbaked doughs are easier to package and take less storage space than baked cookies. Frozen drop or bar cookie dough should be thawed at room temperature until soft enough to drop by spoonfuls on baking sheet or pour into baking pan. Most refrigerator cookies may be sliced without thawing; some may need partial thawing in a refrigerator. Bake same as fresh cookies.

Cakes

Cakes made by standard recipes freeze well, especially if baked before freezing. Prebaked cakes containing fat may dry out slightly after 2 months, and after 4 months, flavor changes may be expected. Synthetic vanilla may give an off-flavor to frozen cakes. If cakes are to be frozen unbaked, use double acting baking powder and do not plan to store them more than 2 months. Gingerbread also freezes well. Angel food and sponge cakes baked before freezing will keep satisfactorily up to 1 year.

Wrap baked cakes in moisture-vapor-resistant material, seal, and for greater protection, store in cartons. If cake batter is to be frozen in baking pans, wrap pans in moisture-vapor-resistant material, seal by heat or with tape. Pack cup cakes in top-opening box, overwrap with moisture-vapor-resistant material and seal.

Thaw unfrosted baked cakes in the wrapping about 2 hours at room temperature. For quicker thawing, place cake in wrapping in front of a fan, or unwrap and place unfrosted cakes in a very slow oven (250° F.) for a short time. Thaw and keep a frosted cake in the refrigerator until serving time. Thaw cake batter at room temperature and bake immediately after batter is thawed.

Frozen frostings and fillings: Uncooked confectioner's sugar frostings freeze best. Fat in a frosting helps keep it from drying and forming crystals. Candy type frostings, such as fudge and penuche, are satisfactory if cake is stored a short time. They may crack after 3 or 4 weeks. Boiled and other soft frostings and cream fillings are not suitable for cakes to be frozen; those containing egg white dry out and become crystalline.

Pointers on Wrapping Baked Foods for Freezing

Place food in the center of the wrapping material and draw the two opposite sides of the material up together. Then fold down two or more times until the wrapping is tight around the food. Then fold the ends under and secure with locker tape or string or overwrap with stockinette. A good way to package cakes and pies is to place cake or pie on a sheet of moisture-vapor-resistant material, place a second sheet over the top, then heat seal around the edges.



